

A Report to the 42nd District

Winter 2004

Kelli Linville

State Representative
42nd District

District address:
104 West Magnolia St.
No. 306
Bellingham, WA 98225

e-mail:
linville_ke@leg.wa.gov

Toll-free Hotline:
1.800.562.6000
1.800.635.9993
(hearing-impaired)

Committees:

Agriculture & Ecology,
Chair
Appropriations

Task Force on Economic
Competitiveness

Legislative Council on
River Governance

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well in the New Year. As the 2004 Legislative session gets underway the question I will keep in mind is, "What can we do to help our state?" As I answer this question, I will continue to represent the 42nd District and the needs of our neighborhoods and communities. I appreciate the honor to serve you and would like to thank all of you for contacting me to share your thoughts.

My priorities this session are to secure good-paying jobs for Whatcom County residents, continue to reform unbalanced water regulations and strengthen educational opportunities for all students. We need to be creative to help our state's economy grow, and build on the success of last year's session. To meet that goal, I see three areas where the Legislature can make a difference:

Jobs. Everybody deserves the opportunity to earn a decent living.

Education. Students should be one of our top priorities, from kindergarten to college, because they are the future of our state's prosperity.

Health Care. Taking care of our families as well as ourselves should be affordable and accessible.

As always, I want to hear from you. You can call or write to share your thoughts and comments. I value your participation and it is your opinion that helps guide my decisions – my voice is your voice in Olympia.

Best wishes,

Kelli Linville
State Representative
42nd District



Representative Kelli Linville

Jobs:

One of the best things we can do for our state is to foster a business environment that brings more high-paying jobs to small towns, while maintaining the quality of life. In the 2003 session, the Legislature passed solid economic development bills, including transportation improvements and capital investments.



Manufacturing jobs have been leaving our state and the country in droves. I have and will continue to work to ensure that Alcoa Intalco Works stays open in Ferndale and we save those good-paying jobs. Alcoa Intalco Works has been a good corporate community member. Intalco employees are hard workers dedicated to the communities which they live. This session a bill will be introduced to give temporary tax relief to aluminum companies until power rates go down in 2006.

I know that working families cannot bear the burden of new taxes. We must make sure that Washington's schools, health care and worker training meet the needs of all people. Priorities of Government activities which I have fought for during my tenure on the House Appropriations Committee have finally taken root. We will continue to fund the highest priority public programs, create a business environment that retains and produces jobs, be accountable for results producing policies and live within our means.

We will put together a smaller supplemental budget this session that will continue funding critical programs. With the current economic climate, more citizens are enrolling in schools and more people are seeking services; these forecasts draw more resources from the budget. The economy is continuing to recover and I see several areas in the budget that are worth investigating:

- Improvements to health care in under-served rural areas and better health care for children in low-income families.
- Funding for implementing watershed plans and capital improvements to meet our water commitment to people, farms and fish.
- Help for struggling students in the public schools and ensure fair and accurate K-12 student testing.
- Maintain incentives to retain and create 21st Century jobs and keep our commitment to agriculture.

I would like to see more worker training and re-training programs like those provided at Bellingham Technical College. Again and again businesses seek out educated and qualified workers. We can answer their request by funding worker training and re-training programs. This in turn will create more job opportunities in areas hit hard by the poor economy.

Water:

As Chair of the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, I will be working to achieve a balanced solution for how much water to keep in our streams and rivers. I can't emphasize enough that we must continue to work together to find ways to get water to people, farms and fish. Additionally, the Governor's proposed supplemental budget earmarks funds to continue water law reform through water conveyance, irrigation efficiency and wastewater reclamation.



PBT's:

Many of you have sent me postcards requesting funds for the continuation of the PBT's program. I am pleased to share with you that included in the Governor's budget is \$436,000 dedicated to the mercury chemical action plan. This money will be used to resume fish tissue monitoring, develop the next chemical action plans, and continue the fluorescent lamp recycling. I have taken the lead ensuring that this appropriation remains in the final budget.

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE):

Washington recently faced the first case of BSE, so-called "mad cow" disease, in the nation. I recognize the importance of this problem to Whatcom County dairies as businesses and to all of us as consumers. On January 15, 2004, I held a joint committee hearing with the Senate Agriculture Committee where leading experts from both state and federal agencies provided testimony about this issue. As a result of this hearing we are developing legislation that:



- Bans the transport and use of downer cows.
- Ensures that the Washington State Department of Agriculture has the tools to adopt and implement the National Livestock Identification program.
- Supports the development of a live bovine test for BSE (R&D funding to WSU).
- Encourages certification of the WSU laboratory for BSE testing.

A Report to the 42nd District

Education:

We are increasingly aware that the future of our state rests in the hands of our children and the schools where they are educated. As a former educator, I am passionate about improving our schools and that is why I am hopeful about several reforms and projects under consideration in the 2004 session.



Simple majority for school levies. Should we require a supermajority to pass school levies? With an amendment to the Washington State Constitution that would allow a simple majority to pass excess school levies, you will have the opportunity to vote in November and decide this vital issue.

WASL Changes. I support many of the changes to the WASL graduation requirements that are being suggested this session. Starting in 2008, requirements for high school graduation would include the WASL in reading, writing and math, with science added in 2010. We need to make sure the WASL conforms to the state's expectations, including opportunities to retake the tests and alternative ways for students to demonstrate they can meet the standards. Other important changes include eliminating the listening section of the WASL and establish recommendations for special education students and English as second language students. This is a work in progress, but the bottom line is we need to make sure our high school students' graduate with the skills necessary to meet our 21st century challenges.

Higher Education. The Governor's proposed supplemental budget increases higher education enrollment so we have more places for students at our colleges and universities including over \$19 million for our district. Two building projects in the budget bring family wage construction jobs to Whatcom County while opening up more rooms for instruction. At Western Washington University, Bond Hall would be renovated to add classrooms and remove asbestos among other repairs. At Bellingham Technical College, a new welding and auto collision repair building, which will provide room to retrain workers with the latest technology. Both of these projects help us educate skilled workers that businesses want.

Tort reform:

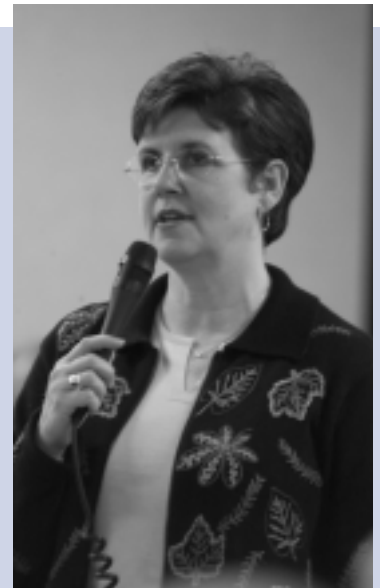
Medical malpractice awards, when a doctor or other health care provider is found guilty of making a medical error can run into the millions of dollars. The scales of justice must remain balanced. On the one hand, our doctors, hospitals and eventually the patients face costs incurred by outrageous insurance premiums. On the other hand, we can't tie the hands of juries who have the right to impose awards as they see fit. This session, we will continue to examine ways to curb expensive settlements, but keep our eyes on patient safety and the constitutional rights of juries.



The best way to avoid medical malpractice suits is to prevent errors in the first place. We need to improve review of physicians who have three or more medical malpractice judgments in excess of \$50,000, increase the sharing of quality improvement ideas, and require health care providers to participate in continuing education. A bill to increase Medicaid funding for doctors and medical staff delivering babies could provide relief for a particularly important field of medicine. Finally, a proposal to pay the malpractice insurance premiums for retired physicians volunteering to help low-income and uninsured people could encourage additional medical care in rural areas.

How to get in touch with me during session:

During the 2004 Legislative session (January 12-March 11), please call me on the toll free legislative hotline 1.800.562.6000 (1.800.635.9993 TTY-TTD) or you can call my office directly at 360.786.7854. My email address is linville_ke@leg.wa.gov



How to stay involved and up to speed on activities in Olympia:

To keep informed on issues important to you, visit the Legislature's website at www.leg.wa.gov/house. You can find committee agendas, see what bills have been scheduled for hearings and sign up to receive a daily schedule. To do this just click on the link [waleg-schedule](#).



Please
place
stamp
here



State Representative
Kelli Linville
P. O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Please tell me what you think!

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U. S. POSTAGE PAID
Washington State
Department of Printing

**A Report to the
42nd District**



State Representative
Kelli Linville
P. O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504